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Invocation of Lord and Lady

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The following is the text of a ritual titled Invocation of the Lord and Lady which was presented by the Fellowship of the Sacred Grove at a local gathering in November of 1993. Prayers and invocations are not included in the text as these are delivered spontaneously by the Priest and Priestess.

Part One: The Preparations

[Priest, Priestess, Bard and Quarters begin standing in circle just outside the circle that will be consecrated for the ritual. Other participants begin outside of circle and will later enter through South gate. Customarily, East and North are male, South and West female.]

The Warning

[The Bard moves to center of circle and addresses all.]

> "We gather tonight to open the veil between the worlds.
> This is not safe - To pass beyond that threshold we must leave behind the protections of the mundane world. We must remove the veils which disguise us and lay aside the jewels which dazzle our eyes. We must take the risk of Seeing, and of being Seen.
> For our protection we rely upon the Lord and the Lady, whose Children we are. Any who are not ready to approach Them in reverence, love and trust should leave now.

[Pause]

> Those of you who have chosen to walk this path, prepare yourselves to meet God and Goddess.

[Bard remains in center.]

2.Claiming the Circle

[East takes one step forward into the circle and speaks, facing inward.]

> "In the name of the Lady of Light, and in my own name,
> I claim this circle as a place of Men.
> Let all who enter be bound to speak, and hear, the Truth.
> So mote it be."

[West takes one step forward into the circle and speaks, facing inward.]

> "In the name of the Sacred King, and in my own name,
> I claim this circle as a place of Women.
> Let all who enter be bound to Perfect Love and Trust.
> So mote it be."

[South takes one step forward into the circle and speaks, facing inward.]

> "In the name of the Lord of the Greenwood, and in my own name,
> I claim this circle as a place of Nature
> Let all who enter be bound to the sacred web of life.
> So mote it be."

[North takes one step forward into the circle and speaks, facing inward.]

> "In the name of the Queen of Heaven, and in my own name,
> I claim this circle as Sacred Space.
> Let all who enter be opened to the presence of God and Goddess.
> So mote it be."

Marking the Circle

[All sing Listen to the Lord and Lady while Priest and Priest mark circle. When finished Priest and Priestess stand before alter in North, facing South.]

The Challenges

[East and West move to South gate and form Arch with athames. North crosses to South gate. Participants enter through South gate one at a time and are challenged at knife point by North and South, then shown to places by Bard.]

> Who seeks to join this fellowship?
> Will you support and defend your companions on this quest?
> Do you swear to use that which you learn in this circle only in service of the light?
> Are you ready to meet the Mother and Father of All life?
> Then enter and be welcome.

[Comment: This took several minutes, but the effect of the delay was positive rather than negative. The lengthy challenge process acted to center and focus the entire circle.]

5.Sealing the Circle

[Bard speaks from center.]

> We have stepped beyond time, to a place not of earth. In the presence of the Lord and Lady, we join together and are one.

[Bard crosses to take place in circle, then takes hand of next person deosil and says We are one. Each participant takes the hand of the next repeating We are one until the whole circle is joined. When the circle is complete, the Bard announces again We are one!]

Part Two: The Mystery

Pathworking

[Priest moves to center and leads all in pathworking. After preliminary relaxation and centering, the working takes the participant first to four symbols - a living tree, a sword, a cup, and a standing stone - each of which holds a message for the visitor. Then the participants journey to an ancient clearing around a weathered stone alter where, in times long past, their ancestors honored the Lord and Lady. In that holy place, the participants call the Guardians of the Quarters, then prepare to invoke the Lord and Lady.]

[Comment: The actual invocation of the Lord and Lady follows without transition, inviting the participants to continue to experience it in the ancient clearing.]

Calling the Lord and Lady

[Priestess joins Priest in center. Priestess invokes the Lord. Other celebrants invoke Lord and/or Lady as they feel inspired. Priest closes invocations by invoking the Lady. All invocations end with Come join with us. which is repeated by all.]

Chant:

Priestess begins chant alone, all join in after first time through. Participants should stand, clap and dance as they feel moved.]

> Isis, Osiris, Woden and Freya; Lord and Lady, Brigid and Lugh

[Chant builds in power to be cut off at peak by Bard striking staff on the ground.]

Readings

[During chant East and West have stepped outside circle and deliver readings from opposite sides of circle. Bard is at center. Bard speaks.]

> Hear now the words of the Great Mother who is called Isis, and Freya, and Brigid, and many other names.

[West speaks.]

> Think not that I am far from you, for you can see my visage in the moon, and hear my voice upon the wind.
> I am the silence of the sea, and the secret of the standing stones.
> I am the beauty of the green earth, and the mystery of the stars.
> I am the Mother of all things, and the soul of nature, who gives life to the universe.
> I am the source of your beginning, and I am the fulfillment of your desire.

[Bard speaks.]

> Hear the words of the All Father who is called Osiris, and Woden, and Lugh, and other names beyond counting.

[East speaks.]

> You know me not, but I am with you. My face is the sun, and my voice the thunder.
> I am the strength of the forest, and the keenness of the sword.
> I am the rune giver; the patient teacher; the revealer of secrets.
> I am the warrior, the defender of the weak and the companion of heroes. I am the Horned One. I am the gateway to the Mysteries, and I am Mystery itself.

[West speaks.]

> Arise and come unto us, for mine in the womb that bore thee and the breast that nursed thee. Your joy is our joy, and your sorrow, our sorrow. We would teach you the ways of healing, and the joys of love, for our law is love unto all beings. We give the knowledge of the eternal spirit, and beyond death we give peace and reunion with those who have gone before. We would lead you to love and to freedom. Call on us, and we will show you the hidden paths.

[East speaks.]

> Follow my white stag into the deep forest. There is mystery in the wild places, and a path that leads between the worlds.
> The path is not easy, for it leads to that which cannot be given by another.
> Those who would share our freedom must create it anew within their own hearts.
> But no one who walks that path walks alone. Fear not to call on us, for we have not forgotten our Children.

Great Rite

[Priest and Priestess take positions in center of circle, Priest kneeling with chalice, Priestess standing with athame. Priest makes spontaneous prayer to Lord and Lady. Priestess prays and/or responds on behalf of Lord and Lady, customarily ending with So mote it be as she lowers the athame.

[Comment: a common theme here is to invite the Lord and Lady to join with us as they join with each other, but sensitivity to the inspiration of the moment is the prime concern.]

Blessing

[All sing We all come from the Goddess as Priest and Priestess circle group, touching and offering a blessing to each in turn. When all have received a blessing, Priest and Priestess return to circle and all join hands. Priest and Priestess signal end to song by returning to center.]

Part Three Closing

Thanking the Lord and Lady

[Priest thanks Lady, Priestess thanks Lord.]

Return to Mundane Consciousness

[Priestess return to circle. Priest resumes pathworking in ancient clearing, thanks quarters and draws participants back into normal consciousness. Priest returns to circle.]

Opening the Circle

[Bard moves to center and addresses all.]

The rite is ended, the circle is open, may the blessing of the Lord and Lady be with you all. So mote it be. (All respond.)

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